52| and before little girls, and it is not unusual to see a big girl leaning
83| against the door of the hut with ears wide open so as not to miss a
864 word, and finding cause to burst into gales of laughter. Are all these people capable of being shocked? I doubt it, even as far as the young girls are concerned, for all or almost all of them have their favorite nooks in the bush. Moreover, they can tell each other vulgar stories, and one should hear them as they clean and spin cotton, or when in the evening, shut in a communal hut (1), they play, laugh, and

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1. In the evening all young girls are shut in a communal hut or dormitory under the supervision of an old woman. The woman's duty is to prevent young men from coming in and to see that the girls do not go out and seek a boy friend's hospitality. There is a dormitory in each quarter.

chatter before going to sleep. Could it be otherwise? Since all the men have soungourou, they know that their fathers and brothers each have one, and they are not unaware that their mothers see no /160/ wrong in giving themselves to their men friends. The great crime is allowing oneself to be caught.

52| You may think I exaggerate, yet when two women, each with
83| a nursing infant in her arms, are crouched in the court by their pots in which tô (gruel) is simmering, it is very unusual for them not to be gossiping about the marital infidelities of their neighbors and sometimes even their own. I am saying nothing about the old women with turned-up chins and toothless jaws; they are experienced midwives and talk mainly about abortions.

They are all the same, and more than one mother has made me blush as she gave the breast to her last born and smiled sweetly at the rest of the brood frolicking near her. In wishing health and prosperity to a child that a woman is nursing, one sometimes makes a mistake about its sex, and without respect for one's ears nor pity for